

NEWSLETTER

February/March 2016

www.southernceramicgroup.co.uk/

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Editorial

In an attempt to start making after the Christmas break I was confronted in the pottery with frozen pipes and equally cold clay. I am ashamed to say that my enthusiasm did not get me over the activation barrier and I have left things until at least the water supply defrosts. Fortunately contributors to this edition of the newsletter have been more industrious and we have a full and varied edition with book reviews, demonstration reports and commission adventures amongst others. We hope you enjoy this issue and please feel free to contribute your events, work or pottery news *via* the contacts which can be found on the back.

Keith Menear

Summer Exhibition 2016 – Bishop's Kitchen, Chichester

Early in February I will be communicating with all members to announce the opening of registrations for this year's Summer Exhibition at the Bishop's Kitchen. I cannot accept applications prior to that date so please keep an eye on your e-mails. You should get your applications in as quick as you can to avoid disappointment.

This year we have introduced some flexibility in the process which would allow us to have more exhibitors, in order to reduce the number of disappointed applicants. However, we don't have space in the Bishop's Kitchen to guarantee everyone a place.

I am very pleased to announce that Vidya Thirunarayan has joined the Summer Exhibition organising team, replacing Jan Griffiths as Publicity Manager. This is a key role for the success of the event, so if you have any new ideas for promoting our exhibition please don't hesitate to contact Vidya or myself. I want to thank Jan for her years of dedicated and very successful work publicising our exhibition, and for her vital contributions to the overall management of the event.

Kevin Akhurst



Entries From Our 2015 Summer Exhibition

What's On

Call for Entries : Amberley Museum & Heritage Centre is holding a **Traditional Crafts Event**, to be held over Saturday 28th, Sunday 29th & Monday 30th May 2016 and is pleased to invite craft practitioners to take a stand. The event provides the opportunity to showcase your skills, demonstrate your craft and sell to the public. Pitches are free if you demonstrate. For more information and application forms please contact Keith Greenfield email turnerofwood@btinternet.com



Portrait Sculpture of the Head. Class 2016 : I propose to run a portrait sculpture class in the early part of 2016. There will be 10 classes on Tuesday afternoons, from 1.00 to 4.30, starting January 5, at 30 Wittering Rd, Hayling Is, Hants PO11 9SP.

For full details, or if you have any questions please contact me For details please contact Zyg Kruk at zyg@kruk.co.uk Tel : 02392469104 or 07864995834

Su Cloud Ceramics

I will be running a 6 wk Hand Building course, Nature Inspired Seedhead workshops, also Raku and Tile making starting from September. These will be held at my newly purpose built studio in Bognor Regis. Small, friendly groups for all abilities, so limited spaces available.

I have courses running in October and November. All courses are run on a Wednesday and Thursday in the morning and evening. If your interested or need more information, please contact me at :- spcloud@btinternet.com. Website www.sucloudceramics.com



Ceramics Classes Studio 1, Holton Lee, BH16 6JN

I am a 3D Design graduate running evening classes suitable for all ages and abilities. Should you choose to join me at an evening class, I will be demonstrating hand building, mould making and decoration techniques. One to one tuition will enable you to develop your own ideas using techniques you are particularly interested in.

Free tea, coffee and cake and a great sociable atmosphere.

Monday or Thursday evenings 6:00 – 9:00pm. A course of 6 sessions for £120.00. All materials provided, at a small extra charge of £1 per lb after decoration and firing.

For more information or to book a course please call Sara on 07971539686 or email sara_churchill@hotmail.com. Beginning Monday 4th & Thursday 7th January 2016



Glaze Group Meeting January

Present: Diana Carter, Kevin Akhurst, Jan Griffiths, John Howell, Tom Paine, Vidya Thirunarayan

The Glaze Group met on Tuesday 12th January at Diana Carter's house and enjoyed the usual stimulating discussion of glazes and other pottery issues.

Kevin passed round some test pieces from his latest wood/salt firing where he tried different combinations of cobalt and titanium and, in a separate series of tests, different levels of copper as colorants in his salt glazing slip. Some quite complex surfaces resulted and, as expected, with sufficient titanium, cobalt produced green coloration rather than blue.

Vidya brought an elaborately decorated mug, purchased in Budapest, which prompted a discussion of the likely decorating technique. She then asked about the possibility of producing red glazes on stoneware in an electric kiln. We discussed various proprietary stains as well as ways of trying to achieve reduction with copper.

Tom brought a recent agate-ware porcelain bowl with blue cobalt swirls which he had fired in his gas kiln. He noted the colder bluish coloration to the reduced porcelain, compared with the warmer coloration when a similar bowl was fired in an electric kiln. He also pointed out a speckled red haze on one side of the bowl, which appears to have been picked up in the kiln from a copper red pot nearby.

Jan brought a teabowl made at a recent course run by Shozo Michikawa. She had glazed this with an Emmanuel Cooper transmutation glaze. This resulted in a finely crazed pale green. Underglaze iron brushwork was diffused by the glaze.

The meeting concluded with round-table discussions of the relative merits of bisquing or firing raw and also on alternative techniques for spraying glaze.

Kevin Akhurst

Group & Members News

SCG AGM

The SCG AGM was held on Sunday the 24th January at the Portchester Community Centre where it was agreed that Vidya Thirunarayan will join the committee and take over the marketing role from Jan Griffiths. Abigail Ducharme has agreed to take on responsibility for the groups social media activities on Facebook and Twitter.

Website Coordinator Tony Thompson will step down at the end of this 3 year term and the group still has this position open. If anyone is interested in taking on this activity please check out last months newsletter where Tony outlines the role in more detail. The rest of the committee have agreed to continue in their current roles which was supported by the AGM.

New Members

A very warm welcome to new members: Andrew & Lolly Vincent from Felpham, Bognor Regis, bringing the current membership total to 131

Next Committee Meeting. The committee meets every few months or so and our next meeting will be on the 5th May 2016. 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.

A Wedding Vase

Back in October 2015, the Southern Ceramic Group received an email with special request.

"I am getting married on the 19th December and was wondering if you could help me with a small tradition on my wedding day to my future Turkish husband."



It was to make a Wedding Vase that is part of a tradition where all the unmarried ladies dance with a vase filled of sweets and money (coins), and then the bride smashes the vase. The pieces of vase are considered good luck for their marriages to come. So it has to break! SCG member Nadia Hopkins took up the challenge and tells us more.

"I discovered Pottery throwing in 2010 when I joined an adult class at Peter Symonds College - Winchester. I have always been fascinated by clay since infant school when I discovered that one of my hand made pieces had been fired and glazed with a transparent glaze for the school fete. I was completely amazed by the end result (It was a snail vase!)

As soon as I sat on the wheel and threw my first pot I was hooked. A few weeks later bought my first wheel...Never stopped experimenting since.

When Tony sent me Amanda's email about a wedding Jar small project I was interested and intrigued with this tradition and tried to find out where it was coming from. I could not

find anything on the internet and wondered if anyone else I knew would know about it. A Turkish friend from Istanbul told me she never heard of it. But I did find that in Jordan there is a similar tradition when starting new projects. The team breaks a pot and each of the members keeps a shard for good luck.

When Amanda contacted me she also sent me a video where I could see the Jar style and the Bride dancing with the pot and eventually smashing it on to the floor. Although it is a shame that the pot had to be broken for good luck, it was similar in a way to the lovely wedding cake shared with all the guests. Amanda wanted the Jar to look old as if recently dug from the ground.

Fingers crossed - the jar broke as expected, wishing all the happiness to Amanda and Ferhat."

Nadia Hopkins

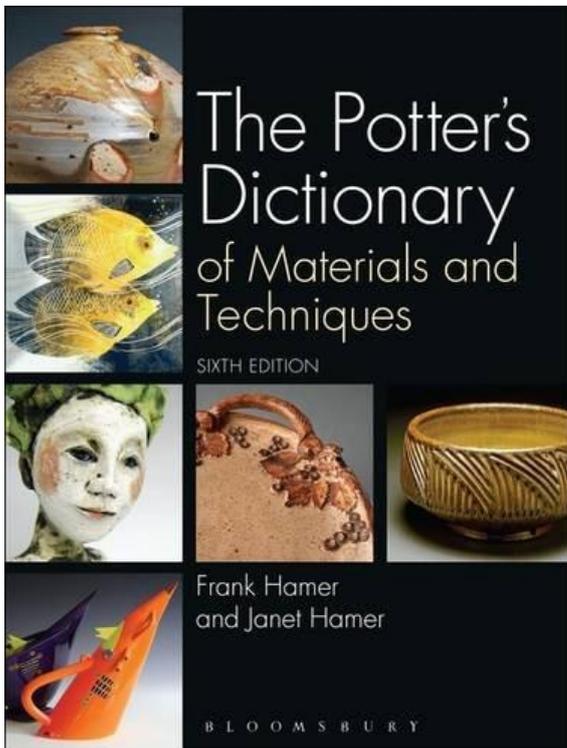
Book Review

The Potter's Dictionary of Materials and Techniques Frank and Janet Hamer, Authors

Publisher: Bloomsbury Publishing - 19 Nov 2015

ISBN: 978-1-4081-8419-6

Hardcover, Dimensions: 27.8 x 4 x 21.7 cm, 454 pages.



I have just had the pleasure of comparing this latest edition, the 6th, to my much used, well thumbed, second hand 1997 4th edition. The first edition was published in 1975, with a 'colour edition' in 1993, though I suspect that this was limited to only the central colour plate pages. Now, this 6th version is in full colour.

Whilst the chemistry of clay and glazes is of major importance and does not change, the colour portrayal of the ceramic results is of major significance to the understanding of the whole process. I have numerous second hand books that describe and explain the transformations that occur during the firing of glazed clay, but the black and white photographs in some of these books add absolutely nothing.

This colourful book is after all a Dictionary, laid out in the standard A-Z format, covering all aspects of materials, tools and techniques that a potter is likely to come across, and most probably, a lot more besides. But there are new items added, such as 'Anagama', '3D printing', and sections expanded like that on 'raku' to cover 'naked raku', 'smoke crackle', and then also 'agate ware',

which has gone from being accompanied by one black & white photograph to 5 colour photographs. And then 'slip casting' is explained with a lot more photographs. I could go on.

What I like is the cross referencing, where one topic draws you to look further into another cross referenced and relevant explanation. In a similar fashion, not all diagrams and photographs are titled or labelled, but are explained in the adjacent text, forcing you to read and understand the point being made.

The central colour plates have been total reorganised. Intended to highlight the main and different firing processes, the early edition had selected examples of finished work with descriptions of the specific techniques used. However in this new edition, the colour plates are divided up into 'Oxidation firing', 'Reduction firing', 'Raku', 'Maiolica', 'Crystalline glazes', 'Salt and Soda', 'Stoneware', and 'Porcelain' with examples set over a background of typical firing cycles.

At the rear Appendix section, the tables have been re-laid out, now with 'alternative oxide names' and 'effective ranges of glaze oxides', with a list of Internet Resources for Potters. The glaze recipe section has also been expanded.

An excellent reference book with a nice final personal touch - in the explanation of a 'loving cup' the old b&w photograph has gone, replaced by a more suitable one in colour, and another added, of a two handled cup inscribed "Janet & Frank Hammer: 2012" to mark their diamond wedding anniversary. Sadly, Janet died shortly before this version was ready for publication.

Tony Thompson

Demonstration Report : Patia Davis

SCG Demonstration. Slipware by Patia Davis.
Sunday 8 November 2015, Petersfield Community Centre.

“Stick to what works – ceramics keeps you humble”: Patia Davis.

Patia Davis kept us entertained with a demonstration of slipware to 30 SCG members and guests (many from local pottery groups). She had with her slabs of rolled out clay, jugs of slips, and a range of slip trailers.

The first questions were about what clays she used for her slabs and pots, and what clays she uses for her slips. She has generously supplied the following details:

The clay is 2 parts Kueper Marl red from Pot-clays which is mixed with 1 part stoneware. As Patia makes her own stoneware, you will need to experiment to make sure that any slip or glaze you make/use, fits with the clay body.



Patia placing slip decorated slab onto a hump

The base white slip is HVAR ball clay 75%, Quartz 5%, China clay 20%.

Add 40% porcelain to this base for very bright white slip.
 Add oxides or colours to the base slip.

Vary the water content for pouring and trailing slips

Black slip.....8 parts red clay
 1 part iron oxide
 1 part manganese

Base glaze lead bisilicate frit 72
 china clay.....12
 high plas 71 ball clay..10
 calcium borate frit 6

She emphasised the need for having the clay at the right degree of leather hardness – not too soft, not too hard, not too wet, not too dry; judge this by experience.

The slabs 7-8mm thick (800x800mm) had been prepared using a slab roller, and placed on plywood batts. Each slab is heavy !

Demonstration Report : Patia Davis continued

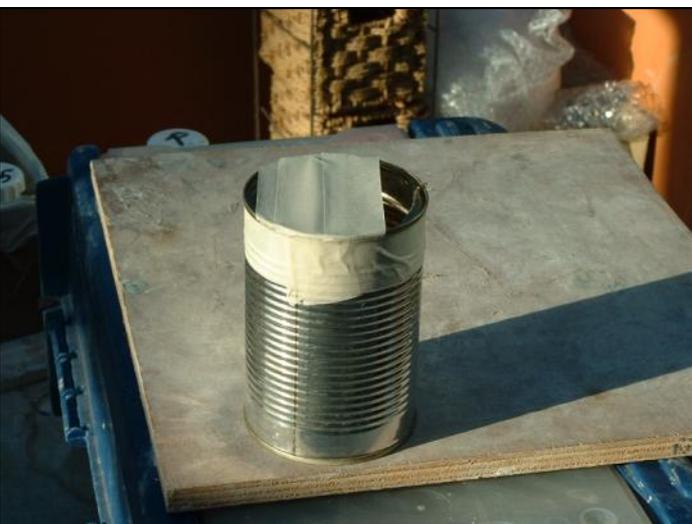
For large items, or for covering large surfaces, you need the slip in a large lipped jar, thoroughly stirred before use. From this, the slip can either be applied using a wide bushy brush (which can hold a lot of slip), or the slip is poured onto the chosen area of the slab, supported at one end at various angles, so that the slip runs down the slab to give a uniform coating. The thickness of this base coat of slip can be adjusted using a brush. Different colour slips can be applied to different areas of the slab, or allowed to overcoat a base layer. What is essential is that slips are applied wet on wet.

When working on large slabs, you need a lot of slip, so the slip trailers need to hold enough to complete the job without needing to refill the trailer. Patia used soft walled polyethylene bottles from 250 to 1000ml, with screw top with a moulded nozzle. Flexible tubing – acquired from many sources (try eBay) – is fitted to the nozzle, with the tip cut to length and shape.

Before applying slip to the slab (or pot), the trailer is shaken to make sure the slip is of even consistency, and delivery of slip from the trailer is tested on the plywood support –squeeze the bottle. This avoids hard plugs of slip lodged in the nozzle from causing uneven flow or unwanted splurges of slip onto the slab.

If more than one type of slip is to be applied onto a slab (to obtain different colour designs), then it is essential that all the slip trailers are filled and tested before trailing starts. The design should be established before any trailing.

Applying slip from a trailer onto a large slab is an energetic process and needs practice. To get an even trail of slip onto a slab, the rate at which the slip is squeezed out and the speed at which the nozzle is moved over the surface of the slab have to be carefully controlled. Keep the nozzle clear of the slab.



Patia also showed us how she makes, and uses tin can trailers. Average size tin cans, cleaned, dry with the lid removed and sharp edges filed away are used. One can for each slip. The ‘working nozzle’ is made using masking tape – see the picture. The size of the ‘nozzle’ is adjusted the placement of the masking tape.

The slipped slabs are allowed to dry before they are placed onto or into moulds.

Left, A tin can slip trailer – slip in on the right, slip out on the left – the size of the slip out slot



Wet onto wet slip. Note how the different colour slips do not mix

Demonstration Report : Patia Davis continued

With the slip design applied to the slab, the plywood support (with the slab) was lifted and banged down onto the bench. This had the effect of spreading the layers of slip without mixing. Intricate patterns could be achieved, including fine lines and 'halos' around blobs. Getting the 'correct' effects is largely by trial (and error).

With designs completed, slabs were allowed to dry, and then placed into a mould and carefully pressed in. Handles would be added once edges had been trimmed.

Patia demonstrated placing a slip decorated slab onto a hump mould, to make a dish with the design on the inside. The slab has to be gently moulded onto the hump, taking care not to stretch the decorated surface. Pinch and ease, and take your time. The slab was lifted and blended around the hump, working from the top downward. The rim was carefully trimmed using a needle, and then 'burnished' using the same hessian cloth used in preparing the slab.

The day included our usual American Lunch, and concluded with a slide show of Patia's work.

To learn how to really do it, Patia Davis will be teaching on two courses this June and July 2016.

The first course 29th June - 3rd July is shared with guest demonstrator James Burnet-stuart. It will focus on Throwing and decorating using red earthenware and slips.

More details... <http://www.workshops-at-wobage.co.uk/news/5-day-earthenware-throwing-and-slip-decorating-patia-davis-and-guest-james-burnett-stuart/>

The second course July 20th -24th, will focus on slip decorating again in earthenware... working slip techniques on flat slabs of clay and using hump moulds to form dishes with the options of some thrown rims to make baking dishes.

More details.... <http://www.workshops-at-wobage.co.uk/news/5-day-slip-decorated-earthenware-patia-davis/>

For an illustrated history of slipware, and a range of practical advice, see Mary Wondrauch on Slipware. A&C Black, London. 2001

Zyg Kruk

Pictures Tony Thompson



Patia Davis' slipware dishes

Demonstrations : John & Jude Jelfs

Southern Ceramic Group Demonstration by John & Jude Jelfs

28 February 2016. Porchester Community Centre. 10am to 4pm

John and Jude will be demonstrating their methods of work and showing us their finished work at our next demonstration.

John and Jude write:

We met at Cheltenham Art School in 1972. John was studying pottery and I was doing fine art – sculpture with painting.

After art school, John worked for Russell Collins at Hook Norton becoming proficient at repetition throwing. After a while he wanted to start his own pottery. We found an old shack in Bourton-on-the-water, and began to set up with very little money. We borrowed a wheel and some clay from Russell, and found an old electric kiln on a school rubbish dump and we were off! We made earthenware honey pots for a local bee-keeper, and gradually managed to get everything else we needed. We changed to stoneware in 1976.

Early on we made mainly domestic ware, but over time our work has evolved to what it is today. We are still in the same place, though we have rebuilt the shack!

John

From my first exposure to studio pottery I was immediately excited by the work of the late Bernard Leach and his lifelong friend the Japanese potter Shoji Hamada. It was the strength and quietness of their pots which most excited me about their work. My pots are all hand-thrown from a blend of West-country clays, and are often altered while still soft on the wheel. I use a long firing cycle in a gas kiln as this brings out the subtlety and depth in my glazes. I use local ingredients whenever I can.

My pots have been exhibited in Japan and at the Victoria and Albert Museum, as well as at a number of leading galleries in the UK including St Ives Ceramics, The Leach Pottery, St Ives; The Contemporary Ceramics Centre, London. My work continues to evolve. To me, all very exciting!

Jude

After studying Fine Art (Painting with Sculpture) at Gloucestershire College of Art, I worked as a potter for a number of years after I married one (John Jelfs). Over time, I have found myself moving back to where I started, away from functional wares towards more sculptural ideas. The current work is all drawing-based with a strong figurative theme - ceramics which combine painting and sculpture with pottery.

Domestic arrangements on the day

Tea, Coffee and biscuits will be provided. Please bring a contribution to an American style lunch, and your own crockery and cutlery.

Future Demonstrations

In September/October 2016 **Elaine Peto** will demonstrate building animal forms.

If you would like to have a demonstration by a named ceramicist, or you would like some aspect of ceramics as the subject of a demonstration, please contact me and I will do my best to meet any request.

Please complete the registration form and return as indicated. Please also note that the report of Patia Davis' demonstration will appear in the next issue of the newsletter.

Zyg Kruk

SCG demonstrations co ordinator

Demonstrations cont.

Registration Form : John & Jude Jelfs. 10.00am 28 February 2016

Porchester Community Centre, Westlands Grove, Fareham PO16 9AD

www.porchestercommunitycentre.co.uk

Name:

Address:

Contact phone no:

Email address:

SCG membership no:

Name of guest:

Date:

This registration document can be completed on line and sent by email to: zyg@kruk.co.uk

The registration fee is £20 for members, £25 for their guest.

Payment (please indicate): BACS or Cheque

BACS

Account: Southern Ceramic Group

Bank: Lloyds

A/c no: 26954360

Sort code: 30 90 34

Reference: JelfsYourName

Cheques should be made payable to Southern Ceramic Group and posted (with a printed copy of the completed registration form) to:

Zyg Kruk

30 Wittering Rd

Hayling Is

Hants PO11 9SP

zyg@kruk.co.uk: 02392469104 or 07864995843

Zyg Kruk
Demonstrations coordinator



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.howell400@gmail.com**Website**Tony Thompson **Tel** : 01489 572115**Email** : apttony@aol.com**News letter**Keith Menear **Tel** : 07788908182**Email** : keith.menear@hotmail.co.uk**SCG Summer Exhibition**

Kevin Akhurst

Email : kevinakhurst@btinternet.com

Please note that as we go to press changes have been made to the composition of the SCG Committee. These will be reflected in the next issue of the Newsletter

NEXT COPY DEADLINE : 17th March 2016

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

Next Newsletter due : 1st April 2016

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

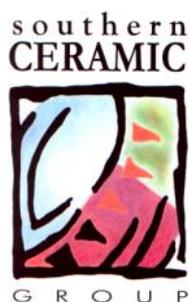
Interested in becoming a member of the Southern Ceramic Group?

Application forms can be found on the group website at:

<http://www.southern Ceramic Group.co.uk/Information/SCGMemberApp.pdf>

Acknowledgments

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



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