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## Editorial

My first effort as your newsletter editor contained, only as far as I have been made aware, one error - an important one - please note that our Webmaster, Neil Rampton's email address has now been corrected, see page 27.

This edition contains a preliminary report on p4 of our on-going new exhibition at Winchester - many thanks to Vasu and her team for all their hard work so soon after Bishop's Kitchen - and a brief review of the sales at Bishop's Kitchen in the Pricing Discussion paper.

Special thanks to the members who have contributed studio ideas for this edition. Please keep them coming as well as your news.

Neil Dewey

## Group and Members News

**URGENT - New Membership Secretary required.** Unfortunately Debbie Page has had to tender her resignation due to a change in her employment. At the time of writing we still seek a replacement. Should you be interested in the role she would be happy to answer your queries. The main workload is at membership renewal stage in March/April, otherwise it is processing new members, generally a few per month. Cheques received will need to be banked. If you are interested in helping the Group by taking on this vital role please contact Debbie as soon as possible so that there is time to get used to the role before the renewals.

Please contact Debbie on either [scgmembersecretary@yahoo.com](mailto:scgmembersecretary@yahoo.com) or on 07786 444433

**AGM** All members are invited to the AGM which will take place during the lunch break of the Mike Flynn demonstration on Sunday 19 January 2020 at Portchester Community Centre, Westlands Grove, Portchester, PO16 9AD. The demo will run from 10 to 4 pm (doors open at 9.45 am). It is free to members but please let Zyg [zyg@kruk.co.uk](mailto:zyg@kruk.co.uk) know that you are coming and please bring a contribution to an American Supper style lunch, see form on [px](#).

**Next Committee Meeting.** The committee meets every few months or so and our next meeting will be: Monday 9 March at 7.30 at Vasu's House, "Tanglewood" Outlands Lane, Curdridge, SO30 2HD

If you have anything you would like to bring to our attention please contact: Sandie Dixon, [2sandie@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:2sandie@tiscali.co.uk) or any other member of the committee.

### A welcome to our new members...

Linda Kelsall-Barnett - Chichester

Adrienne Shields - Worthing

Annie Wiggans - Eastleigh

## What's On

**First and foremost**, our exciting new exhibition and collaborative venture with Hampshire Cultural Trust at the Winchester Discovery Centre, which commenced on 23 November and continues until 19 January. All the details are on page 4.

### SCG Demonstrations

Mike Flynn and SCG AGM            19 Jan 20, Portchester. Full details and booking form on p24-26

#### Advance notice:

Gareth Mason                            26 Apr 20, Petersfield.

Frances Doherty                        25 Oct 20, Denmead.

### CPA - Contemporary Ceramics Centre at 63 Great Russell Street, London, WC1B 3BF

Sophie Cook - "Multiplicity"            16 Jan - 8 Feb            P.V. 15 Jan

Emily Myers, Anna Silverton and Ali Tomlin  
"Line & Form"                            13 Feb - 7 Mar            P.V. 12 Feb

Hannah Townsend                      12 Mar - 4 Apr            P.V. 11 Mar

[cpaceramics.com](http://cpaceramics.com)



# Artist Opportunity

## Little Forest Open Competition



Display your work at **Art in the Garden 2020**  
plus 'production fund' of up to £500

Little Forest Land Art founders Jan Griffiths & Adrian Mundy are looking for an exciting artwork to feature on their '4th Plinth' for Art in the Garden 2020, an annual open studio event in the Hampshire countryside, featuring work from numerous artists and makers.

Judges: Stuart Rodda, Exhibitions Organiser, Southampton City Art Gallery; Lisa Traxler, artist & our winner from 2019; plus LFLA's Jan & Adrian

Full details: [www.littleforestlandart.co.uk](http://www.littleforestlandart.co.uk)  
Closing date: 20th January 2020

 #lflandart  
 LittleForestLandArt  
 littleforestlandart  
[littleforestuk@gmail.com](mailto:littleforestuk@gmail.com)

### 6 Week Pottery Courses at Cranleigh Arts Led by SCG member Cabby Luxford

Tuesdays            28 Jan – 3 Mar, 2pm – 4.30pm  
Tuesdays            17 Mar – 21 Apr, 2pm – 4.30pm  
Fridays                20 Mar – 24 Apr, 10am – 12.30pm  
**£180 (incl. materials)**

Cranleigh say: "Six week pottery courses aimed at all levels that encourage you to express your creativity in clay. Our beautiful pottery has up to date tools and equipment to help create your masterpieces whether on the potter's wheel or using a wide variety of hand-building techniques. This is a progressive learning environment to discover, develop and improve your skills. Small groups ensure plenty of individual attention and sessions are relaxed with a friendly and supportive atmosphere."

For more details and booking visit  
[www.cranleighartscentre.org](http://www.cranleighartscentre.org) or call Cranleigh Arts Box Office on 01483 278000



## Social Media - Tim Thornton

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Tim would like to receive more "stuff". He's too polite to chase you, so as Editor, I've repeated his column from the last issue of the Newsletter. No apologies from me!

Plus Tim is to organise a workshop on the basics of photographing pots and editing the photos, which will cover getting them ready for social media. Date not yet known. Details should arrive via Tony Thompson's feed in due course.

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I've taken on running the SCG social media accounts on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

Whilst these will be useful in helping to promote events such as Bishop's Kitchen, and Winchester I'll aim to keep them active all year round, partly to build up a following for the events, and also to spread information round to members of the group (this will be in addition to existing channels like Tony's emails and the newsletter).

Please email me at this address with anything you'd like posted – it could be a nice pot you've made, some spare kit you want to sell off, an exhibition you attended or you have coming up, or anything else that may be relevant. Also, images! Preferably at least 1024 pixels square resolution (don't worry about them being too large), and if they can have nice wide borders it makes it easier for me to crop them to the different image sizes Instagram and Facebook use. If you have video, then even better. But without images it won't get posted on Instagram, and you'll need to persuade me that it is worth posting on the other accounts.

Our accounts are below – please follow them, so SCG posts appear in your feed.

Also, if you would like SCG members to see what you are posting on your social media account(s), please use the following link to let us know your account details:

<http://www.southern Ceramic Group.org.uk/members-page/social-media/>

### Southern Ceramic Group Social Media

Instagram: [@southern Ceramic Group](#)

Facebook: [@southern Ceramic Group](#)

Twitter: [@southern Ceramic](#)

Tim Thornton, [scg\\_social@southern Ceramic Group.org.uk](mailto:scg_social@southern Ceramic Group.org.uk)

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## Newsletter matters

**Next Copy Deadline** - Please note that I would appreciate contributions for the next newsletter by 7 March for a distribution date of 1 Apr 2020.

**Keep me posted, please, at any time before the deadline** with news of your own exhibitions that will take place during the course of the next newsletter edition, and any other news or technical matters that might be shared.

**Photos.** Please send these as separate files. If your document contains embedded photos that is not a problem as it shows me where they should be placed but I do need them as separate files as well.

Neil Dewey, [neilhdewey@gmail.com](mailto:neilhdewey@gmail.com)

## Exhibitions - Winchester 2019 - The New SCG Exhibition

**CITY SPACE**

**SOUTHERN CERAMIC GROUP**

Over 500 pieces by 50 potters on display and for sale!

23 NOVEMBER 2019 - 19 JANUARY 2020

**HAMPSHIRE CULTURAL TRUST**  
 Location: Winchester Discovery Centre, Jewry St, Winchester SO23 8SB  
 Opening times: Mon-Fri 10am-7pm, Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 11am-3pm  
 hampshireculture.org.uk

**Winchester**  
 FREE admission

City Space is operated and funded by Hampshire Cultural Trust. We are a registered charity (no 1130583) and company (no 59196222) in England and Wales.

### Private View of Winchester SCG Exhibition a smashing (!) success

Hampshire Cultural Trust has set up a beautiful exhibition of work by 50 SCG members at Winchester Discovery Centre. The Private View on 22nd November was a great success. Lots of drinks and nibbles, the space packed with impressed visitors, good vibes and heartening sales.

There were a series of activities and demonstrations in December, which we will review in our full report in the next edition of the Newsletter.

We hope that the exhibition continues to be a success in its last few weeks in this New Year. If you haven't yet visited it – do try and go. Winchester makes a good day out too!

Exhibitions Team  
 For further details contact Vasu Reddy at [vasureddyceramics@gmail.com](mailto:vasureddyceramics@gmail.com)



## Glaze Group Meeting Notes

### Minutes: 11 Sep 19

Present: Barbie Plastow, Kevin Akhurst, Charles Stileman, Tim Thornton, Tom Paine, John Howell, Lesley Dixon, Mick Dixon, Jan Griffiths, Nadia Hopkins, Keith Sloan

#### Jan Griffiths

Jan shared details of a Japanese piece acquired on a trip to Japan. It had been made by Kochi Hidestoshi b1960 who had set up his own studio at Shibada in 1991. Everybody admired its rich green copper based Oribe glaze. its sculpted form and had been wood fired. Jan pointed out that wadding had been used on the base to allow it to be glazed and not stick to the kiln shelf.

She also brought to the group's attention a green glaze called Golden-Hann by Mirka that was covered on P77 of the Sept/Oct edition of Ceramics Review.



#### Nadia Hopkins

Nadia had recently hosted a workshop at her studio by Spanish potter José María Mariscal: see

<http://www.ratlake-ceramics.co.uk/jim-malone-workshop-week>

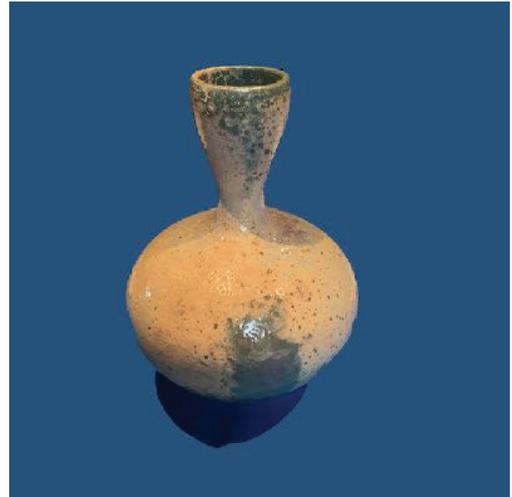
José has been taught the Andalusia method of throwing whilst he is now based in Catalonia. The clay used on the workshop was a Spanish Clay from Potclays. Nadia showed a piece she had made subsequently, based on applying the things she had picked up from the week. The piece had been covered by blue slip and then a clear glaze which had been sprayed before firing in Nadia's electric kiln. The relief decoration was created by a combination of carving and use of cling film.

Nadia showed a second piece which had a Crystalline Glaze 25% zinc, recipe available from Nadia. The clay used was a super white stoneware sprayed with porcelain. It was suggested that she should look at the piece in UV or bright light.



## Glaze Group Meeting Notes - September cont.

Nadia's third piece had been produced despite having problems with her gas kiln. She had to rebuild the top part of her gas kiln part way through firing. She is experiencing problems with damper plates not fully closing and it was suggested that in such circumstances to reduce the amount of gas.



### Charles Stileman

Charles showed some old clay pipes; he often finds them in his London garden.

There was some discussion about impurities such as asbestos for which Tim added some detail about Johnsons Baby powder.



### Keith Sloan

Keith had attended a Susan Halls Summer school at 318 Ceramics which he had enjoyed.

## Glaze Group Meeting Notes - September cont.

### Lesley Dixon

Lesley is planning some Raku firing and spoke about potters in Australia and the USA using liquid quartz to waterproof Raku. Liquid quartz is available for cleaning coffee machines. John Howell had used brick sealant. There was also mention of a building product called Seek-n-Seal

Lesley was also after advice on suitable glaze recipes for raku and advice on firing. The advice given on firing was to do it by eye, wait for bubble to pass, and remove when red and shiny. The surface will start to bubble again if the temperature rises too far.



### Mick Dixon

Mick reported that he had been trying Phil Rogers' ash glazes – in particular a nuka glaze. In his first trial he had problems with pinholing (see pot on right in picture), but these were eliminated by slowing down firing in the range 890 – 960 C and using a thinner glaze layer (pot on left). Tom noted that he had eliminated pinholing in his cone 6 float glazes by soaking in the cooling phase.

Mick said that he had used flint instead of rice husk ash in the recipe for the nuka glaze and this led to a discussion of sources of ash. Tim said that he had seen rice husk ash for sale on ebay, being marketed as a soil conditioner. Jan told the group that she had been using reed ash, made from reeds growing in her garden.

Nadia asked for ideas on how to make fleck clay. She had tried using iron spangles for the fleck but they were too fine for what she wanted.

### Tim Thornton

Tim told the group that he had been on a four day course with Akiko Hirai at Clay College in Stoke on Trent. He noted that she uses raku clay for all her work because she likes the coarse texture. She also goes to some trouble to develop the surfaces she wants – often building up layers, for example brushing on red slip, then bisque firing, then brushing on white slip, then bisquing again, then laying on one or two layers of glaze. He showed the group a mug made by Hirai.



**John Howell** reported on his travels around the UK. He commented on the fact that pottery by Neil Tregear (based on the Isle of White) seemed to be on sale everywhere he went.

## Glaze Group Meeting Notes - September cont.

### Tom Paine

Tom told the group that he was continuing to make a dinner service and, following previous glaze group discussions, he had succeeded in eliminating cracking in the large dishes.

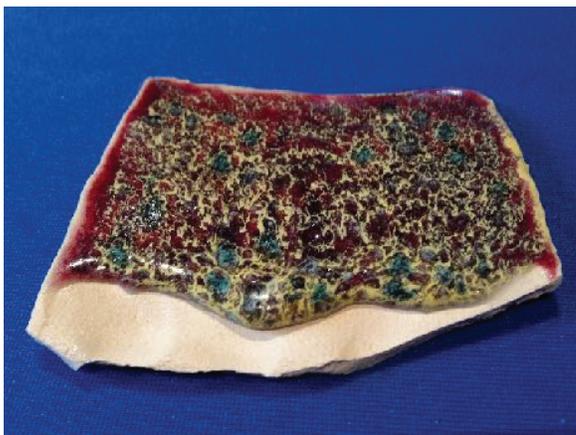
He had visited the island of Gotland off the coast of Sweden, which is famous in Sweden for its pottery. He said there were probably more than 20 studios open to the public on the island and he visited four or five of those. He showed the group two mugs which had purchased during his visit, noting that the black mug seemed similar to ware he had seen made at Prinknash Abbey in the 1960s.



### Mike Bush

Mike reported on his trials with copper reduction glazes. The photo shows two pots, in one of which the red colour had not developed uniformly because the glaze was not thick enough. He fired these in an electric kiln, using silicon carbide in the glaze to achieve reduction. Mike noted that the SiC needs to be very fine (1200 mesh) and the firing needs to be quick to cone 7 and without a soak, to avoid the copper volatilising.

He also showed several test tiles where had overlaid the copper glaze with a variety of other glazes. The photographs show two of these – one where the overglaze was a titanium glaze with 20% yellow stain, and another where the overglaze was a manganese/copper lustre type glaze.



## Glaze Group Meeting Notes - September cont.

### Kevin Akhurst

Kevin showed the group a sheep's head he had made at a demonstration by Richard Ballantyne. At the demonstration Richard made one himself and then issued hollow closed cylinders of clay to everyone attending, to immediately make a similar head. Kevin subsequently glazed his one – black/blue glaze on the eyeballs and black slip on the nose and inner ears, then the eyeballs and nose were protected with wax resist and the whole head was coated in a slip which flashes strongly in Kevin's wood-fired salt/soda glaze kiln.



Kevin also brought a contemporary Chinese celadon vase in which the potter had used crackle as a decorative element. The crackle was on different scales – coarse, medium and fine; the coarse cracks had been stained black and the others brown. The fine crackle was scattered over the pot in small circular patches and Kevin suggested that the potter had used a tool of some sort to cool those areas while the pot was still warm, to stimulate the crazing. The technique of using stained crackle as decoration has a long history in China, dating back a thousand years. The approach of staining coarse crackle dark and fine crackle a lighter colour was described at that time as 'iron wire and golden thread'.

Finally Kevin told the group about a commission he had received to make a model of a pagoda-shaped building. He showed pictures of the actual building and the unfired model and explained that he had decided to use cone 6 glazes as he was concerned that the overhanging roof might slump at cone 10.



Keith Sloan

## Glaze Group Meeting Notes

### Minutes: November 19

Present: Barbie Plastow (host), Charles Stileman, Kevin Akhurst, Nadia Hopkins, Diana Carter, Tom Paine, John Howell, Jan Griffiths

#### Jan Griffiths

Jan started proceedings off with a selection of test glazed pieces. Image (right) shows carbon trap glaze fired right at the top of the gas kiln (cone 9) in a fairly heavy reduction. This seemed to have worked particularly well without any adjustments to the firing schedule. There were also another couple of test pieces with overglazing and a shino glaze to view.



#### Charles Stileman



Charles recently had a glaze firing with his wonderful artificial wood ash glaze over various slips. For some reason the kiln fired extremely quickly up to 1260 and much to his amazement the work came out perfectly! I He may use this schedule again.



He also produced a small casserole dish he made some time ago and has used regularly, with lovely scraffito markings.

## Glaze Group Meeting Notes - November cont.

### Tom Paine

Tom commented that holding the kiln firing for 50 minutes at 1150C eliminated the pin holing he had previously experienced.

He produced a spectacular large sapphire blue glazed dish, and also a bronze float lamp-base - (image right) - plus a deep raspberry red mug containing flint in the glaze which he had passed through a coarse sieve using GS26 red stain (image below) with a textured surface.



### Kevin Akhurst

Kevin brought along a couple of Seto (Japan) picture plates (images below) believed to be dated from 1780 - 1840. They were primarily used for `street food` and the decoration looks to have been applied quickly giving a lovely fresh quality. It looked like the decoration was possibly painted with an earthy iron bearing pigment and possibly painted over a clear glaze as it was likely they would have been once-fired. The flatter plates with a rim are known as oil plates and the others as either stone or herring plates.



## Glaze Group Meeting Notes - November cont.

### Kevin Akhurst cont

He also produced a Richard Batterham jug with a greenish woodash glaze. We all commented on what a piece of perfection it was - very light for the size, the handle and handle stopper fitted perfectly and the runs of the glaze just fell in the right places.

There is also a DVD about Richard Batterham produced by Joanna Bird which we hope to watch at the next session.

### John Howell

John Howell showed us a vase made by fellow member Heather Muir with a grey glaze (below left) which was very appealing and rather like the Richard Batterham jug it felt perfect to handle with such a smooth base and the glaze running exactly to it - very nice! We feel more investigation into grey glazes is needed.

John also brought along an Andrew Harding jug which was quite unusual in both form and colouring - (below right).



## Glaze Group Meeting Notes - November cont.

### Diana Carter

Diana showed a vessel she had purchased from Roger Cockram in 2004 when he first demonstrated with the SCG. We noted that his style has changed significantly as per the demo he did for us a few weeks ago, although still connected with the sea.

John quoted the following tips from Roger:

- 1) replace china clay with 10% ball clay to base recipe to help adherence for once firing.
- 2) the firing range can be increased by adding an amalgam of fluxes - up to 5 or 6.
- 3) to lower the firing temperature replace feldspar with Cornish stone (Charles responded that adding zinc will also reduce the firing temperature, however this will affect the glaze surface colour and texture).



### Nadia Hopkins

Finally, Nadia produced a small box of crystals which had formed at the bottom of her recently mixed glaze bucket - they are spectacular! Does anyone know anything about how/why they may have formed? Absolutely intriguing....

We are hoping to get some testing done of a Japanese rice husk glaze (nuka) over the next several months. Tim Thornton has found a supply that we are all hoping works.

Jan Griffiths  
[griffiths.jan@btinternet.com](mailto:griffiths.jan@btinternet.com)  
[www.facebook.com/jangriffithsceramics](http://www.facebook.com/jangriffithsceramics)

## Studio Tips

### Reducing Plastic Use



it seems most people are trying to reduce single use plastics in their lives. Plastic bags and cling film are so useful to potters and sometimes it is impossible to find an alternative. Here's one idea I came across almost by accident.

I have been using the same plastic (I know!) domes for years, so they are definitely not single use. I used them initially for bringing on strawberry plants in the garden. One frosty night I used one in the greenhouse to protect a precious succulent and another one in my 'shed' to protect a newly made pot from the same hard cold frost. I realised it also slowed down the drying process so now I use them instead of plastic bags to dry pots slowly and to keep them damp enough to work on the next day.

They come in different sizes and are usually called Victorian Bell Cloche. You can find them in garden centres or on the internet. Here's a link to one supplier.

<https://www.keengardener/original-victorian-bell-cloche-pack-of-3.htm>

Sue Thomas

### Shrinkage Rulers



**Shrinkage rulers** made and shared by Derek Potts

You want a 4" wide mug, your clay shrinks at 7.5% and you want to know how wide to make it so that it shrinks to the right size - these may help... If your clay body has 15% shrinkage, use the top ruler as your "making ruler", i.e. if you want your finished piece to have a diameter of 4", just take the 4" mark on the ruler as being 4" - it will be when your piece is fired (roughly :-)) If you haven't made your own test tiles for your clay body your supplier should be able to give you the shrinkage rate.

**IMPORTANT** When printing this PDF make sure that print settings such as "Scale to fit page" are turned off, or "Scaling" is set to "None" etc. you need this page to print at real size. **This page is, and will fit, an A4 sheet.** To check your print before using the rulers measure the ruler at the bottom of the sheet, if it's not 20cm/8" long the print is not real size and you'll need to go back and check your print settings.

Disclaimer: I made these for myself, they're not guaranteed accurate, they're a guide, if that's not sufficient for your needs you probably shouldn't use them :-)

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20  
Start size with 15% shrinkage

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20  
Start size with 12.5% shrinkage

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20  
Start size with 10% shrinkage

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20  
Start size with 7.5% shrinkage

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20  
Start size with 5% shrinkage

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20  
Finished size in cm and inches

Derek Potts has made a shrinkage ruler which works with a range of clay shrinkages from 5-15% to provide a guide to finished sizes in inches and cms.

Full instructions are provided on the document. PLEASE NOTE that Members should not attempt to capture the image opposite for use. It must be printed at exactly the correct size of the original pdf document.

Derek is happy for you to email him and to request a free copy. Please put **SHRINKAGE SCALE** in the subject line to ensure a response.

[derek@upstairscreative.com](mailto:derek@upstairscreative.com)

## Pricing Discussion

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### Pricing Discussion – Denmead - 19 October 2019

Jan Griffiths

One of the comments we hear frequently at the Bishop's Kitchen and in general is how difficult people find it to price their work. My stock answer is to ask another maker to do it for you, but of course it is more complicated than that. There are standard formulas produced by the Crafts Council, really geared to the professional potter and it appears the majority of our members do not fall into that category although we do have several self-employed people.

So, the "what's it worth?" question may elicit a reply of "what someone is prepared to pay for it" and of course that is true - but how to set a starting price? One of our demonstrators many years ago was asked "How can you justify charging £300 on a piece that took you 15 minutes to make?" and he replied "because it took me 30 years to learn how to". Another demonstrator worked totally backwards calculating how much she needed per annum to live a good life – all overheads including rent/rates/food/holidays/materials etc, then how many pieces could she make per month and that is what gave her the selling price. Many of us just have a guess and see what happens.

At the most basic level, we may wish to consider the cost of materials and how long an item takes us to make. Many organisations suggest a rate of £20 per hour as a guide. To that cost we maybe should also consider a percentage of overheads - rent/ rates/ insurance/ heating/ fuel/ design time/ administration/ marketing/ postage ... and the list goes on! It is also suggested that one should add on a percentage profit to this (possibly 30%).

Of course another determining factor is to know your market and where your products fit – clearly if you are selling at a local village hall it is more likely that your high-end products may not sell so well, so perhaps you need to make something which is only sold there if you wish to go down that route. There are so many ways to sell nowadays: direct, online, group shows, open studios, auction, galleries etc. Wherever you decide your products fit, check out the competition before deciding on pricing.

The more methods of selling you have the more difficult it might be to get a consistent pricing model. Galleries take usually between 40% and 350% commission. We need to remember that galleries have their own overheads and so long as you are getting the price you need, be happy about that. If you feel the commission is too high and going to price your product out of the market then perhaps this is not the right selling venue for you. I personally would not consider the 350% end as it would make it far too difficult for me to be consistent across all the other ways I have of selling – on the other hand, if I was being offered a great opportunity to make a one-off special piece and it was going to enhance my profile (considerably!), I could be persuaded to change my mind.

Many galleries require an agreement that you will not sell similar work in the same area (some even stipulate a mileage radius) and do not expect you sell the same products at a lesser value anywhere. This can be overcome by having a different range just for Galleries. Having just purchased one of your lovely pieces from the local gallery customers will not like to see that they could have purchased it for less at the Bishop's Kitchen. It works differently the other way around of course! Some makers never vary their price and will only sell everywhere at the same price as through a gallery. Others may give a 10% discount for direct studio sales.

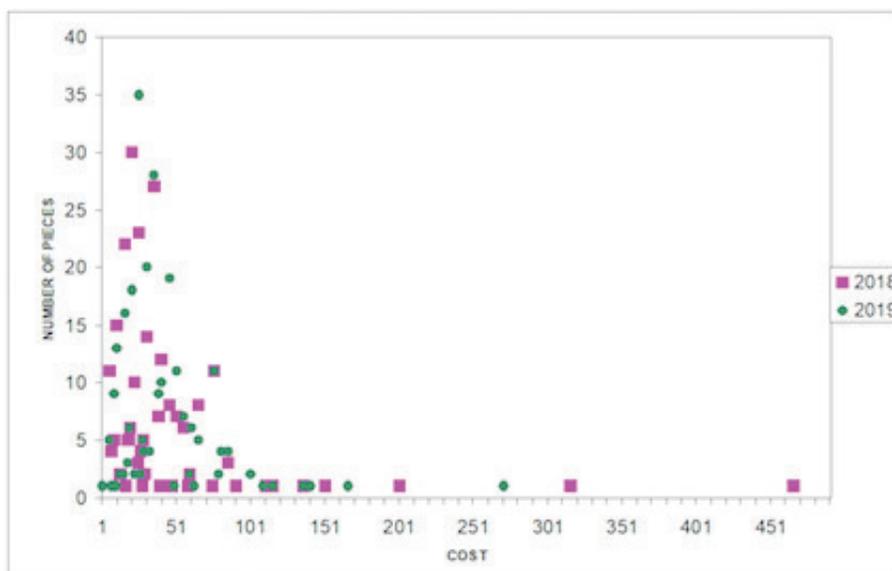
I think that all of us who sell our work at the Bishop's Kitchen and other venues get a tinge of pleasure and our customers certainly respond to what we have to offer judging by the sales figures.

**cont. on next page**

## Pricing Discussion cont.

Vasu and Tony have produced an interesting table and chart for your information about sales at the Bishop's Kitchen. The table has been amended to keep some financial details confidential - (these have already been circulated to Members).

Items Sold at BK	2018	2019
Number of items sold	271	280
Most common price of sold item	£30 (30 sold)	£35 (35 sold)
	£35 (27 sold)	£45 (28 sold)
Number of items sold under £40	154	127
Number of items sold £40 - £59	70	92



The making and selling of items may cost us more than we think once we start to look. For example, ten £10 bowls (just making this mythical item easy to calculate) all sold – great. I have heard many people at the BK collection day tell me they have made .... say £100. However, in reality £100 minus £20 commission minus £20 entry fee minus £20 membership fee minus say £10 petrol/parking for 3 occasions = £30 take home money. Subtract from that the material cost of making and time spent .... not to mention a whole day or two stewarding, then sorry to say that £100 is actually not a profit.

So, in summary, there is no right or wrong way to go about pricing. The sales figures will let you know - but the key thing is to at least look at and understand your product: how much it costs to make and how long it takes, then consider it

relative to your competitors and chosen selling venues.

Many members brought in various items of work to this discussion and all participants were asked to anonymously write out a potential selling price on a ticket which was left inside the piece for individuals to take home and consider. I (and others) also placed some items purchased by myself, and we discussed the range of suggested prices to the actually sold price – interesting.

**cont. on next page**

## Pricing Discussion cont.

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Some comments received from members after the pricing discussion:

- I had noticed that potteries I worked for in the past tended to price work based on the cost of labour being 33% of the cost of production. I have always used this as a basis for costing, timing a batch of pots carefully every time I touched the pots. Of course this does not work for exhibitions as the time involved in preparing pots, admin, delivery etc. would probably be far in excess of the cost of making the work.
- I had noticed when stewarding at BK that the pots sold best at around £40 and your research seems to confirm this.
- Fortunately being semi retired now I no longer need to worry about timing everything I do!
- One member noted how interested he was that the piece put forward for the group pricing session was so undervalued. He explained the making process and the huge amount of time put into it and yes, indeed it should have been estimated at more than the lowest value of £15, but in his opinion a lot of the hard work sometimes goes unappreciated unless we as makers can explain the how!

- Another was delighted at her piece being consistently estimated hugely higher than her current selling price for something similar.

My own tiny pot was just about right to the price I sell at but the other one - recommended prices varied from £10 (!) to £100, with many around £55 which is what I sell it for, so for me it felt like a validation.

A little tip to SCG exhibition entrants – we love to see a range of prices!

If you have any more comments please send to me at [griffiths.jan@btinternet.com](mailto:griffiths.jan@btinternet.com).

Jan Griffiths  
SCG Display Team

For further information please do check-out this really interesting link about the £35 mug sent in by member Derek Potts:

<https://karaleighfordceramics.com/shed-diaries/2018/11/25/lyx8lp1ipvu5vyhl883m9t54nj6g2f?rq=duck%20egg>

and advice for the professional from the Crafts Council

<https://www.craftscouncil.org.uk/what-we-do/overview-talent-development-support/>

## Members Profile - Jennifer Ellis



My interest in clay started when I was at school in the 70's. I was fortunate enough to have a very inspiring teacher who recognised my skills and interest in this medium. On leaving school at the age of 18 I found and applied for a three year apprenticeship at Poole Pottery working in the Craft Section, under the supervision of Alan White.

My time at Poole Pottery was amazing enabling me to learn and perfect my craft skills whilst introducing me to adulthood and a disciplined working life. As a novice, I was placed behind a screen and a high percentage of my work was scrapped to begin with. I was thrown (excuse the pun!) in at the deep end after a few weeks of 'isolated screen life' when I was awarded my own wheel and workbench, so there was no turning back. I became a member of the team of 4 throwers in the Craft Section and whilst facing constant public tours of up to 10 people at a time, watching my every move on the wheel, I learnt the art of throwing. Once I became a competent thrower I could churn out 80 to 300 pots a day according to size. That's me below on part of a luridly coloured Poole Pottery poster in 1975.

I was also offered the opportunity to work alongside Guy Sydenham who lived on Green Island in Poole Harbour. He worked at Poole Pottery in his bespoke studio. It was here, under Guy's guidance I was able to produce individually decorated one off pieces that today can be found in auctions and salesrooms around the country, see below. All the throwers and designers had their own stamp and mine can be seen in the photo to its right.



I have very fond memories of my time at Poole Pottery and am proud to be part of its' history. I recently googled my maiden name Jennifer Haigh/Poole Pottery and to my surprise found a lot of examples of my Poole work.

**cont. on next page**

## Members Profile - Jennifer Ellis cont.



Having spent many years raising my family of four children and working hard in various professional roles, I returned to my love of ceramics taking up the opportunity to teach adult evening classes at Totton College near Romsey, Hampshire. This re-ignited my creativity and passion for the craft, leading me on, as a mature student, to study BA Ceramics at West Surrey University, Farnham.

With Ron Hackney as my course leader, amazing facilities and inspiring peers, the depth of my creative practice flourished. Having the responsibility of firing our own kilns increased my technical knowledge and my engagement with the process as a whole.



Ron's passion and dedication to the ceramic world has stayed with me to this day. I loved every minute of my degree. I learnt so many different processes that contrasted the industrial approach to throwing I knew so well. My approach became much more organic and inspired by architectural insect structures. I began to explore the concept of nests and cocoons developing them into delicate porcelain forms. Following my BA Hons, I was invited to exhibit and sell my work at the CPA London alongside being deemed 'Tipped for the Top' in an article published by Art Review magazine.

During the latter part of my career, I enjoyed 15 years working as an Art Technician and Technical Demonstrator for Foundation/A Level Art in post 16 education in Hampshire. Now retired and having recently moved to Purbeck, I am working creatively more than ever!

I am thoroughly enjoying having my new studio and am able to devote more time to my ceramics. My current work is varied and I never stop enjoying the exploration of clay. I feel there is always more to discover and learn.



At present, I am focusing on texture and finding ways to incorporate that into my work; dipping lace, muslin and cotton into porcelain slip and firing it on to flat ceramic surfaces. I'm enjoying observing how interesting textures can be created by rolling soft clay onto pre-fired broken gravel sized pieces. I am currently planning my next body of work and am excited about the idea of layering different textured clays together, colouring the clays with oxide.



**more images on next page**

## Members Profile - Jennifer Ellis cont.



I am looking forward to many more years of 'playing with clay' and know I will never lose my passion for this fascinating material. I love being part of a community of like minded makers and I know fellow members of SCG will appreciate the sheer enjoyment that can be gained from this creative medium.

Jennifer Ellis



## Demonstrations

### Ceramics Group Demonstration Review:

#### Roger Cockram

Denmead Community Centre, School Lane, Denmead, 20 October 2019, 10.00 to 3.30

Your editor has had the luxury of two reports submitted for publication; the first by John Howell and Kevin Akhurst with photos by John Wren and Kevin, and another from Alec Roberts with photos by Sue Kruk. Some different points were made as well as overlapping observations, so I have exercised editorial privilege, cutting, pasting and rewriting in part to make a single report. I hope the loss of some 'bon mots' will not offend.



Roger Cockram entertained a large audience of SCG members, talking about his career in pottery, his inspirations and his methods of working. He used slides, some great stories about teaching, some science and then some relaxed and confident demonstrations, to entertain and charm his audience.

After leaving Harrow College of Art where he worked under David Leach, he moved to Devon and now is situated in the "pilgrim village" of Chittlehampton, where he works in a huge restored barn making both functional vessels, (delightful casserole dishes, soup bowls, etc.), and pieces of ceramic art.

He told us about his goblets, ("everybody wanted goblets in those days"), and his brown pots - wood-fired stoneware - made for 1970s kitchens modelled on Habitat styles. But Cockram's passion is the sea and the rhythms of the sea. It influences all his work now. Colours, shapes, decorations are all resonant of rock pools, surf, fish, algae and sunlight through water. "To me, a rock pool is just another bowl," he said.

All Roger's work is 'once fired', recently mostly porcelain, but his functional pieces are in stoneware. He mixes most of his clay himself. The stoneware is 80% local clay mixed with 20% natural clay-bearing sand, which he says is better than commercial processed sand because of its wider range of particle size.

The porcelain clay he uses is made from China Clay 55, FFF Feldspar 25, Quartz 15, White Bentonite 10 (adding this up, you will note that this is 'parts' not a percentage!).

He buys his ingredients as powder (not paying to "transport water"), then water is added and mixed in a blunger to a 'single cream' consistency, and left to settle and dry. The porcelain is kept "superclean" as any residue from the stoneware he also uses would contaminate it. As far as the stiffness of the clay is concerned, for various stages he likes to refer to it as types of cheese - rather than leatherhard etc. This might be very soft Brie, to Cheddar to Parmesan!



## Demonstrations - Roger Cockram cont.

Roger demonstrated how he makes swirling wave-like spirals in the forms of his bowls. After using a heat gun to slightly stiffen the rim of a newly thrown cone shaped bowl, he wetted the interior and immediately dragged a tool with a corner (such as a small ruler) up the inside of the bowl while it rotated on the wheel. It's a difficult procedure which needed more than one attempt. Sometimes he gently supports the outside using a wet sponge. If he wants a fine rim on the bowl he would turn the rim afterwards.

He used to wood fire but now he fires in a gas kiln - with an expensive automatic control system - to 1300°C (Orton cone 11) in reduction. The heating cycle, very slow, takes 24 hours and cooling takes another 24 hours, apart from starting with 1 hour of rapid cooling, "leaving everything open". Roger says on his website, *"In the later stages of the firing the kiln is slightly starved of oxygen and this radically affects the colours produced. During this 'reducing' phase, the kiln is allowed to reach more than 1300°C, with flames emerging from every crack in the structure. It is actually quite a dramatic and exciting time. Basically, I am attempting to 'steer' the forces rather than controlling them, to achieve the result of the heat and flames when one sees the result. Conversely, the cooling phase is very slow and cannot be rushed."*

He has carried out many glaze trials to develop glazes that overlay one another to move and bleed up through one another in the kiln in a way that gives the impression of water and surf. For a period he modelled fish on his pots, but now his designs are more abstract.

He also demonstrated throwing a foot onto a bowl which had been allowed to harden. He prefers this to turning a foot: the elevated pot had been given grace and elegance. Often, once the foot has also stiffened, he will gently manipulate the bowl into an oval shape, to reflect the forms of waves in the sea. To avoid the bowl going round again when drying, or during firing, he narrows the foot where it joins the bowl.



In his demonstration after lunch Roger showed us how he brushes layers of glaze to a pot while it is rotating slowly on the wheel (see photo above). He has many different glazes and brushes – all the brushes are round, not flat, so that he can roll them on the pot as he applies the glaze.

## Demonstrations - Roger Cockram cont.

These decorative glazes are usually laid over a celadon base glaze. This is applied to the greenware by glazing the interior when leather hard and then allowing it to dry to bone dry before glazing the exterior. His basic glaze is FFF feldspar 30; Talc 20; Whiting 15; Bentonite 5; Ball Clay 35; Quartz 17; Bone Ash 10; oxides and or stains. He uses platinum to give pots a lustre and brushes on copper to suggest the idea of water spraying up

Roger's advice on glazes:

Tip No1: To convert a conventional glaze for use on biscuited ware to 'once-firing', replace the China clay with Ball Clay, but slightly increase the proportion, e.g. 20% China clay becomes 23% Ball Clay.

Tip No2: To increase the firing range of a glaze, have several different fluxes - say four or five. The idea being that as each has a different melt point, the overall result is to give a wide firing range.

A typical glaze recipe for 'once-fired' porcelain might be:

FFF Potash feldspar 30, Talc 20, Whiting 15, Ball clay 35, Quartz 17, Bone ash 10, White bentonite 5. (Again these are 'parts' not percentages) plus colourants.

The event, it was agreed, was a great success.



## Demonstrations

### SCG AGM and January Demonstration

#### Mike Flynn

Porchester Community Centre  
Westlands Grove,  
Portchester, Fareham PO16 9AD

19 Jan 2020, 10.00 to 4.00

#### Ceramicist's statement:

Mike was born in Germany, and spent some of his early childhood on a farm in Ireland. He initially studied fine art (painting) but turned to ceramics at Cardiff College of Art (1975-78) under Alan Barrett-Danes. His highly distinctive figurative ceramics draw inspiration from such diverse sources as Meissen figurines, expressionist art and the gestural ceramics of Peter Voulkos.



Using a variety of ceramic techniques and materials including raku, terracotta and porcelain, his sculptures explore the dangerous nature of male/female relationships with suggestions of lust, violence, joy and ecstasy.



Michael Flynn is a storyteller. One of those born hoarders of tales from the collective memories of all the cultures in time and space, and the characters that inhabit them. He has rubbed shoulders with real artists and fictional characters through voracious reading; these have been absorbed, mixed and combined through his imagination.

He is a compulsive communicator, inventor, and embroiderer of tales that take us out of the ordinary by reshaping and transforming them into fable. Ceramics is the language in which he constructs and articulates his stories.

**Please register using the form on page 26**

## Demonstrations - Mike Flynn cont.

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Mike has a studio in Cardiff, and spends parts of the year in Poland, Germany or Austria, where he works in artist residencies, teaching and running workshops.

His work is exhibited (and sold) world wide.

He is author of "Ceramic Figures: A Directory of Artists", A & C Black, 2002. He received a Creative Wales Award in 2008.



For more images:

[www.flickr.com/photos/mchaelflynn ceramics](http://www.flickr.com/photos/mchaelflynn ceramics)

**Please register using the form on the next page**

## **Demonstrations - Mike Flynn cont.**

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### **Registration Document: SCG Annual General Meeting and Demonstration**

Portchester Community Centre, Westland Grove, Portchester, Fareham PO16 9AD  
19 January 2020, 10.00 to 4.00.

This form may be printed and scanned after completion for return by email to: [zyg@kruk.co.uk](mailto:zyg@kruk.co.uk)

Name:

Address:

Contact phone no:

Email address:

SCG membership no:

Name of guest:

Registration is **Free for members**, £25 for their guest.

**Payment** for guests only, (please indicate) BACS..... or Cheque.....

### **BACS**

Account: Southern Ceramic Group

Bank: Lloyds

A/c no: 26954360

Sort code: 30 90 34

**Reference: Mike Flynn YourName**

**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](mailto:zyg@kruk.co.uk): 023 9246 9104 or 07864 995843

**The SCG AGM will take place during the lunch break (agenda to follow)**

### **Catering arrangements**

Coffee, tea and biscuits will be available on the day.

Please bring a contribution to an American Supper style lunch, as well as your own crockery and cutlery

## Committee



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01962 869117  
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**Treasurer** John Howell  
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**Next Copy Deadline:** 7 Mar 2020

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Please send contributions to: [neilhdewey@gmail.com](mailto:neilhdewey@gmail.com)

Next Newsletter due: 1 April 2020

## Advertisements

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Interested in advertising in the Southern Ceramic Group Newsletter?

If so please contact Rolf Hawkins: [rolf.hawkins@winchesteranglican.org](mailto:rolf.hawkins@winchesteranglican.org)

The rates for advertising are:

**SCG Members: Free**

**Commercial B&W/Colour:**

Full Page £20

Half Page £10

Quarter Page £5

## New Members

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Interested in becoming a member of the Southern Ceramic Group?

Application forms can be found on the Group's website at:

<http://www.southernceramicgroup.org.uk/join/>

## Acknowledgments

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Thanks go to regular contributors to the Newsletter and all the new ones prepared to have a go and submit something.



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