



# ASP NEWS February 2006

The Newsletter of the  
Auckland Studio Potters  
Society Inc.  
ASP Centre  
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## Studio Opening Hours

Monday	12.30pm - 5pm
Tuesday	12.30pm - 5pm
Wednesday	12.30pm - 5pm
Thursday	12.30pm - 5pm
Friday	12.30pm - 4pm
Saturday	10am - 4pm

Remember to pay \$2 per hour  
up to a maximum of  
\$6.00 per day

## Slide Evening and Talk

The American potter Robert Compton is visiting New Zealand again (he was last here about 4 years ago when we hosted the NZSP conference) and will be giving a slide talk about his work, pottery and the American ceramic scene (at least the Vermont ceramic scene). It will be an excellent chance to catch up, especially those of you who came and saw his demonstrations last time and talk woodfiring, salt glazing and other pottery stuff. No need to book, just show up, we'll provide refreshments as well.

7pm to about 10pm on Friday the 24th February.

To see his work visit the website:  
[www.robertcomptonpottery.com](http://www.robertcomptonpottery.com)



## Porcelain Workshop by John Dawson

The first hands-on workshop for the year is happening on the 25th and 26th March, 10am to 4pm and will be taken by John Dawson. John (brother of Lex) has been a regular summer visitor over the last few years and gave a demonstration here in March 2004. This time he is keen to hold a hands-on workshop to help members get to grips with porcelain. If you've seen his regular exhibitions at Masterworks Gallery you will be familiar with his work; John specializes in throwing this notoriously difficult clay into beautiful flowing forms that all originate from domestic ware shapes, like bowls and jugs. During the workshop you will learn all about the tricks and techniques that John uses to manipulate the clay, controlling it when it gets egg shell thin, joining it together and most importantly how to prevent those maddening cracks.

Participants can choose to use porcelain (which we sell for \$55 per 10kg), or use a cheaper alternative like Nelson White (\$39 for 20kg). We are restricting the school to 12 students and you will need to have had a go on the wheel before as you won't be taught basic wheel skills. The cost for the workshop is \$85, bring a shared lunch and tools. Book Now.



## Subscriptions

172 out of possible 300 members have renewed their subscriptions – Well Done! You will continue receiving the ever informative newsletter, be able to participate in our Annual Exhibition, borrow books from our expanding library and of course come and use our well equipped studio and kilns. For those members who have not managed to get around to re-subscribing then I'm afraid your days of enjoying the above benefits are extremely numbered (to be exact, in 30 days your membership will lapse). This awful fate can be avoided by sending us in your cheque for \$50, including your name and address. I can then update our records and you won't miss out on a thing. If you are unsure about your membership status then please give the Centre a call or email and I can let you know.

*Duncan & Renton*

## A word from our Prez.

*Wally Hirsh*

I have just returned from escorting 27 Americans and Canadians on a 3 week educational tour of New Zealand. I took the opportunity to introduce them to some of the fine ceramics and other crafts to be found throughout the country. They were hugely impressed and I was very proud of the works on display in galleries in Wellington, Auckland, Rotorua, Queenstown and other places.

Several members of the group bought pieces of pottery and carvings in wood, beef bone and pounamu.

Just before I left on the tour I

represented ASP at Jenny Williams' funeral. Jenny was given a very moving farewell in a very special Buddhist ceremony. A large number of people including many members of ASP attended her funeral. She had been a very active member of ASP and had spent several years on the Exec. Jenny also curated a couple of our annual exhibitions. Her contribution to our Centre was a very significant one. Jenny will be sadly missed by her family and many friends and her passing leaves a big gap at ASP.

*Continued on page 2*

We all greatly appreciate what she gave to our society during a life that ended far too soon.

Our monthly Newsletter and periodic emails from our co-directors are important pieces of communication. I urge you all to read them and note the special events and activities which are advertised.

The February the 6th edition of Time magazine features a big spread on the pottery of Queensland based Australian potter, Gwyn Hanssen Piggott. Under the headline Huge Storm in Little Cups, Piggott's amazing works get a rave review. Described as the mother superior of pottery, her still life works are given the highest accolades and the highest prices. "People tend not to use a cup that costs \$A25, 000 ....yes; you read correctly, 25 thousand dollars.

(Ref: Time, Feb 6th pp62-63)

So all I can say after that is, keep on potting!

## **From the Brickyard:**

*Peter Lange*

Sad to come home from exploring the Catlins to find that Jenny had passed away and her funeral had already been held. She was always so conscientious and reliable on the Committee and worked hard at the difficult job of Exhibition organiser. She showed the same spirit fighting her illness - we will miss her at the ASP and send our best to Raymond and her family.

I've called in to the Centre a couple of times over the summer and it is always busy. It's great to see so much going on and Renton doing my job so effortlessly, and more besides - he is a very handy person with the DIY stuff; in the past he's built houses, baches, cars and kilns of course. People seem to be coming in to work and some of the Diploma students are getting in early too.

I have scored a big workshop for a couple of months and can't believe the pleasure of having room to move and equipment to play with like a fork hoist and brick saw. The only problem is that the only door to the place is a standard household width which is OK for taking

the bricks in but not so good when it comes to moving the brick boat/plane/tractor out again. Might have to have my exhibition there and sell the pieces as is/where is.

I met Jim Cooper while I was in Dunedin, in a room at the Polytech surrounded by dozens of strange ceramic beasts he'd made in his curious expressionist/naïve style. Kept wanting to own one but he didn't seem to want to part with them though he had no idea where they were heading. They are quite fragile and would not travel well. A couple of Otago ex-students have set up shop-galleries at Port Chalmers and seem to be surviving. There was a huge cruise ship parked outside, dwarfing the place and spewing out hundreds of inmates ready to take on the day's programme, albatross colony, Larnach Castle then back on the boat and off to somewhere else, pot-buying not high priority it seemed.

I've spent the day at a real brickyard at Ngaruawahia cutting bricks to an arch shape as they come out of the pugmill; great fun and the boss is very helpful and keen to try new things. It's all very Dickensian with large clanking machines, front-end loader, pan mill, 2 pugmills and a very slow-moving tunnel kiln ... 3 days from one end to the other. They make great bricks; not many of these places left now.

Which reminds me - I am going to build my tabletop tunnel kiln at Taupo (22 minutes from one end to the other) the kiln not Taupo, for the NZSP conference and that is not long off now. Check out the [www.nzpottery.com](http://www.nzpottery.com) website for details. This is going to be the biggest and most varied conference for a long time - there's Ah Leon and Greg Daly coming from overseas, and locals like Peter Collis and George Andrews, as well as various events organised by the ASP team. We're hoping to build a kiln out of pumice. There will be lots of socialising and relaxing too, as well as bus trips and the usual tourist stuff.

It will be good to get back to my Monday class after a long break - the Centre really is an enjoyable place with full classes and a zip that never turns off. See you there.

## **Centre News:**

*Duncan Shearer*

A couple of noticeable differences around the place deserve to be pointed out:



1. The kiln shed has got a new roof.

The original roof has lasted a long time, but was so full of holes in the end it was like looking up at the night sky with shafts of sunlight beaming through numerous rust holes. The new roof has building paper underneath it to prevent condensation drips from boring holes through pots, and a vented ridge cap to allow all those sulphur fumes out. It also has a couple of clear light panels in it, letting in so much light that we need to wear sunglasses to load the kilns (it also makes spotting reduction flames from the chimney of the gas kiln nearly impossible) A bit more work remains to be done, like gutters and flashings, but next time you pop in please go and admire it.

2. The pocket handkerchief of a studio that I used to occupy (just to the left as you entered the studio) has been transformed. I've decamped to the Director's studio (the old Artist's in Residence space in the old building) - and so have all my tools. Mike Donaldson and I have constructed a workbench for fixing things like wheels and general maintenance - not one scrap of clay is to be left or placed anywhere near this bench, on pain of having it instantly crushed by the new vice. Mike and Renton have also built a new concrete wedging bench at a suitable low level not to hurt anyone's back, please remember to clean it off after you have finished. The slab roller sits next to it and the number of Leach style kick wheels has grown to three.

A number of other small improvements are slowly happening - the back wet cupboards are getting new door seals and handles, the clay baths out the back are getting organised so that one will be reserved for white clays, the other two are OK for any clay.

All these improvements are a reflection of how busy this place is getting, we have about 126 regular students coming every week and an additional 12 diploma students about to start. However we still have every afternoon and Saturdays available for members to pop down and use the wheels or other equipment and with the zip always on it's never too busy for a cup of tea.



# obituaries

## Jenny Williams 1952-2006

For those members who are unaware, Jenny Williams passed away on the Tuesday 24th of Jan 2006 after battling with leukaemia for a period of 9 months. Jenny was a valued member of our committee for a number of years. She brought a unique quality of discernment and was able to see beyond the obvious.

Jenny wrote these words

“Don't be sad, create a good atmosphere and don't argue with me”

Jenny was a generous person who shared with me on several occasions, particularly the lovely green glaze recipe she had created. I thought it great that someone who was so busy would take the time to help a rank beginner like me and also share some of her trade secrets. Jenny influenced me as a beginning potter and I am very grateful to her

for this. I will miss her “straight to the point” input at committee meetings  
*Michael Billington*

From a routine blood test in May, Jenny found out she had leukaemia. As was typical of Jenny, when she told me she was more concerned with my well being & insisted that I get a blood test. With this kind heart it was fitting that



she had chosen to be a social worker. This also gave her the ability to observe people & her world in a unique way that she would share in gems of wisdom.

I first met Jenny when she attended a ferro-cement class I was co-teaching with Stuart Slater. She was diligent & conscientious, quick to learn & perfect this method & finish the project, a fish fountain for her home which she shared with her husband, Raymond, her daughter & partner & grandchildren. We then learnt tile making with Tom Barter & head sculpting with Toby Twiss. In this class we were asked to bring along

our own models, Jenny brought her grandson, Mathew, he was a model model. These two had a fabulous bond that was strengthened by their love of Thailand. Her face would light up when she spoke of Thailand & her little flat there.

She lived life in fast motion with a number of projects on the go at the same time. She was always turning her hand at different techniques

of sculpture - making bears, bead embroidery, designing houses & she hoped to learn cast glass. We had talked of working together on glass.

Jenny had a thirst learning & love of life, art & family. I have known Jenny for a number of years & it saddens me that her life was cut short when we were forming a deep bond.

*Gael Baldock*

## Stan Jenkins

It is with deep regret that I learned of the death of Stan who died at his home on the 4th Feb, aged 80. He was a very generous man - full of life, humorous, creative and meticulous in all he did.

He trained as a teacher, gaining a third year in Art and Craft within the Education Department. He started his career as an art teacher at Feilding Agricultural High school, and then a period as Art Organiser in the Wairarapa/Wellington followed. He was then appointed Art Lecturer at Palmerston North Teachers' College where he remained until he retired.

Stan was a man with several deep interests: the teaching of art - he has been described as a notable potter and had his own workshop in Feilding. He was a superb photographer in black and white, processing all of his own work. He later turned to colour and became a skilled documentary maker in 16mm colour. He produced four documentary films on potters: Smizek, Stichbury, Castle and Harry and May Davis of Crewenna Pottery in Nelson. These documentaries have a very fine quality about them because Stan, as a potter, had a great understanding of the processes shown. He was a member of the NZSP and contributed much on Committee work.

His last enthusiasm was with the restoration of old railway steam engines - working with a team at Palmerston North and videoing their restored engines and their excursions. His videos can be seen on [www.steamrail.org.nz](http://www.steamrail.org.nz).

Latterly he was a member of the NZ Ceramic Heritage Trust, negotiating for the use of Clark House as a ceramic museum. Stan was not a well person for some time before his death, but he was always cheerful and positive. Our family thought very highly of Stan and regarded him as a special friend. He made a huge contribution to society and the world of creativity in particular.

*Peter Stichbury*

## Salt Kiln

The Gas Fired Salt kiln has fired it's last pot and like the joke, 'old salt kilns don't die, they just melt away' is due to be demolished. In its' place we want to construct a brand new salt kiln of about the same size (10cuft). We also want the flexibility to fire it with either gas or diesel and for the firebox to be easily accessed to repair the inevitable damage from the salt chemicals. So we are holding a design competition to see if members can come up with a new take on what a good salt

kiln should look like. The judging will be done by Renton and Duncan and the prize is to have the first firing free. The winner will also be expected to help build the kiln along with assistance from members and students. So start hunting down those kiln plans, trawl the internet, experiment with matchboxes for bricks and send the results in. We want to start building this kiln in April. Contact the Centre for more information about the kilns shelf size and what we have in the way of burners.



## classified

All phone numbers in these sections are in the Auckland free-calling area unless an area code is explicitly stated.

### For Sale

Dilys Gill has a large number of pottery books for sale, we have the complete list on the Centre's notice board, or phone 4451806 for more details.

Phillip Luxton has a large amount of pottery related equipment and materials to get rid of, if interested phone 269 7274 for an appointment.

## exhibitions

### Pots of Ponsonby

In the Window  
Andrew Van der Putten  
26th February to 12th March  
Exhibition  
Island by Jeannie Van der Putten  
12th March to 2nd April

### Objectspace

Best in Show 28 January to 25 February  
Best in Show 2006 is the second graduate exhibition to be held at Objectspace and features work from makers/designers graduating from Manukau School of Visual Arts, Unitec, Auckland University of Technology, Te Whare Wananga O Awanuiarangi in Whakatane and Otago Polytechnic of Art through Auckland Studio Potters. Work was selected from each of the graduate exhibitions by representatives of the institutions and Objectspace with an emphasis on bodies of work that were innovative and thought-provoking. Our selection features work that references craft and design traditions without being fixed to a particular genre or functionality, broadening possible readings and allowing for more experimental approaches to be represented. Visitors are invited to vote for the work which they feel provokes, excites and inspires them the most.

Objectspace is at 8 Ponsonby Rd Auckland, Open Tuesday to Saturday 10 to 5  
Phone: 3766216

### Waiclay National Ceramics Exhibition 2006.

Deadline for entries is 14th March with a first prize of \$2500. The judge this year is Janet Mansfield. Contact Janet Smith on (07) 827 8188 for more details.

## workshops

### Earth-building workshop

March 11-12th May 6th-7th  
Hands-on two day Earth-building workshop covering Earthbuilding techniques and applications including:  
adobe in-situ, rammed earth, cob, paving, pizza ovens, passive solar design.  
fee: \$150 pp  
contact the Quarry Arts Centre for further info (09) 438 1215

### Raku Workshop

with Lynda Harris  
A unique opportunity for those with some basic experience with clay work. Bring already bisqued pots (not earthenware) for glazing and firing.  
Topics include: Slide presentation, Slab building, Decorating, Glazing, Raku firing, Intro to kiln building  
date: Sat & Sun, 18 & 19 March 2006, 10am to 4pm  
Titirangi Potters, Club Rooms downstairs, behind Titirangi Community House  
Sth Titirangi Rd, Cost: \$85  
contact: Karen 817 8968



The new kiln shed roof

### Situations vacant (temporary)

Renton is heading to America in late March for a couple of months to make pots with Jeff Oestreich. That means we need a temporary Centre Director for those 10 weeks. The job entails a bit of everything, but boils down to kiln loading and firing, general maintenance, computer data entry and lots of tea drinking. So if you're interested in stepping into the breach then please contact either Duncan or Renton for more details.



The new workbench

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