



ASP NEWS January 2007

The Newsletter of the
Auckland Studio Potters
Society Inc.
ASP Centre
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Renton Murray
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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 \$3 per hour
up to a maximum of
\$9.00 per day

member's event

Waiheke Sculpture Trip – 10th February. The idea is to meet on the 9am ferry boat to Waiheke (make your own way to the ferry and buy your own return ticket) Once at Matiatia we'll all jump on the bus to the start of the Gulf Sculpture walk. About half way we'll stop in to the Guthries to see their amazing art collection. At the end of the walk is another bus ride to Oneroa for lunch and a sit down. In the Afternoon we head to the Te Whau sculpture gardens. After that there's a couple of options; those that want to return back to Auckland will head to the ferry, those that want to stay on the Island will head to one of two baches. Two members have generously offered to put up their places for our use and we can fit about 15 people all up. For more info about the trip call Committee member Jo on 2997346 or 021 1271833, or contact the Centre.

Presidents Report

Michael Billington

I hope everybody has had time to rest up and recover from the rigors of the passing of 2006 and had a great start to 2007. I had a very pleasant New Years Eve spent with a group of ASP potters. It was an unseasonably cool evening and somebody mentioned that lighting a camp fire would be good. So with no further ado, rocks were assembled and a fire started in the middle of the lawn. Sensibly one member of the gathering suggested that lighting the fire under the temporarily erected Gazebo wasn't such a good idea so it was moved back a little. Some hours passed and all was well until a 'gunshot' sounding explosion came from the fire as the rocks heated up – I have never seen a group of potters move so fast. If people were nodding off at all – they were well awake now. This all supports my belief that all potters have a latent pyromaniac gene (with some not so latent), hence the variety of firing techniques we come to master at ASP. But altogether we all had a very nice evening (thanks Chris S).

Duncan Shearer leaves us soon (how will we cope?) on his overseas adventure and on behalf of the Committee and all of our members I wish him great success

and lots of fun and many adventures. Duncan is a font of knowledge and many people have learned a great deal from him. I can foresee many times when a problem at the centre will emerge (probably to do with a kiln) and we will have to 'Google' the answer rather than having the luxury of being able to ask Duncan directly. It is a pity we can't plug him into a computer and do a 'brain dump'. Many thanks to Duncan for being such a wonderful resource at ASP and helping so many people to achieve their goals.

On a more serious note it is important for users of our centre to tidy as they go. It is a little annoying when you pick up a bat (not cricket or flying version) and find that it is encrusted with clay. Also wiping down work benches before you leave is important. People should bring their own towels to use not the spare ones in the studio. As with tidying as you go in the studio – the same things should happen if you use the facilities in the house. It is unfair on Lois if she has to clean up after people who don't follow these simple guidelines.

2007 I hope will be an interesting and productive year at ASP. Best wishes to you all for the rest of 2007.



The New Director

As of the 1st February the new arrangement for standing at the Centre is as follows:

Mondays – Renton Murray and Peter Lange (afternoon)
Tuesdays – Renton Murray
Wednesdays – Renton Murray
Thursdays – Jo-Anne Rail
Fridays – Peter Lange

subs

Firstly a great BIG thank you to all those members who have fronted up with their subs money – it makes running this place so much easier when people pay promptly. To everyone else please can you pay now. Dig the subs form out of the bill pile from Christmas and send it in right away.

Centre News:

Already the purge has started and the first victims are dry pots left over in the wet cupboards. These are now laid out awaiting final termination in the dreaded clay baths of Golgotha, to save them you need to identify them. Next on the list at the end of the month is the bisque ware.

The fate awaiting those abandoned pots would send the United Nations into a frenzy of Security Council resolutions. Act now and save your pots by glazing them (you have after all paid for the whole process, why stop half way?).

From the Brickyard

Peter Lange

There have been a lot of important events in ASP members' personal lives over the last month or two, most of them very sad with the loss of family or friends. So it was really great to get along to the church to celebrate the wedding of Helen Adams and Tom Curran, both involved with the ASP and very dear to all of us. Helen has been making decorated domestic ware for a long time now, and also helps Brendan with his production work, and Tom has been a student at ASP classes. It was a wonderful wedding with a fiddly-diddly band playing in the church and family members singing beautifully; and then the reception at the Narrow Neck Boating Club could not have been at a more beautiful place on the beach with Rangitoto as backdrop, perfect weather, dogs, kids swimming, yachts and sparkling wine, music and speeches – small wonder that Jeremy got his gear on and plunged into the water in his boxers even before the wine was served. Tom's Tongan family accepted Helen as one of their own and Helen responded by doing a fair rendition of the tau'olunga (after the wine was served). A great way to start the New Year and we wish you both the best.

Lex and John Dawson have had a sad start to the year with the death of their mother. She must have been a patient mother with both of them involved in building very smokey home-made kilns in the backyard of their house forty years or more ago. We send you both our sympathy. John is due out here soon and will be making pots and teaching my Monday morning class for a term – he works at Holloway Women's prison as a pottery tutor and my class (15 women and 1 man) will have to be on their best behaviour. And they will be, once they find out how John normally deals with

his difficult students. He has asked us to clear out the clay shed and put bars on the window and a hatch on the door just big enough to fit a home-made scone through.

I'm on the last lap before my exhibition on 1st February (6pm, Corbans Estate). You are all most welcome to come along - it's been a full year and I am looking forward to the 2nd February.

Anagama Firing

We have nearly filled up all the slots for the next Anagama firing – phone now to see if you can take part. Loading begins under the supervision of Jo-Anne on Tuesday the 23rd January and she will also be overseeing the firing along with Chris Southern. Drop in anytime throughout the firing days of Friday to Sunday if you want to see this amazing kiln in action.



Tributes to John Green

Charade Honey

Student work experience – UNITEC 1988. Let loose in Howard Williams chicken shed in Albany for three weeks with a man who made fairies – terrifying. We had so much fun, laughing, drinking wine, smoking, driving around listening to music. He dyed his hair to match his Doc Martins. Don't think I did much work. John and I stayed in touch for seventeen years. "Stay true to your self Honey" he always said to me with a chuckle.

Ka Kite John, much aroha.

Jill Dawson

John Green was a wizard. He possessed the magic that infused lumps of clay with the life that teemed in his imagination. Faeries, amiable monsters, strange creatures and bearded, dancing characters; they all materialized from his imaginative world into our prosaic one. Always, they seemed to come trailing a back-story, as if they were characters from some wonderful children's book.

Their personalities showed in their attitudes, often caught mid-movement, in their costumes with boots and tassels, but most of all in their eyes, sometimes merry, but often shy, with even a touch of anxiety.

In 1984 John worked at the Dominion Road "Potters' Arms" studio and shop with Peter Lange, Lex Dawson and Matt Stafford. I had for several years fiddled around with hand-building, making little figures and whimsical creatures. John was working towards an exhibition and with huge generosity invited me to join him both in the making and the showing. He had great technical skill developed from solving problems of how to make four furry legs stand and when to hollow out a section to prevent kiln explosions. His expertise he willingly shared with me as we worked together in a studio in a small upstairs room at the back of the "Potter's Arms". As he worked he talked too, with and about the characters evolving from the white clay. It was a process filled with enjoyment and laughter as names would be tried and expressions added, altered or wiped away.

"It's all in the eyes, Jill, it's all in the eyes..." John would say.

And it was, in those eyes sparkling with enthusiasm and humour.

Howard Williams

John Green. One-time butcher, then ceramic artist extraordinaire, plus painter, cartoonist, poet, songwriter, musician, story-teller, joker – and Best Friend.

As John and I lived not far apart in the Paremoro/Albany area some 30 years ago and both worked full time with clay, we became firm friends, sharing ideas, hopes and dreams, laughs and sometimes tears.

I played violin for some of his poetry/music family days and took photos of his miniature stage set for his first published CD cover. As editor of the NZ Potter magazine I published photos of his work and coverage of his exhibi-

tions. In return he supplied me with drawings, cartoons and poems.

After his disruptive split from his wife and their two daughters, John rented my caravan and shared a workspace in my studio. I got to know this unique clay artist very well then; from the full-on ebullient storyteller, guitar player and songster, to the weeping child-man needing emotional support in his shattered family situation.

For many months, early every morning when I arrived at my studio, there he was,

working already; clay-covered hands squeezing life into a knob of best modelling clay, singing growly-voiced along with a Django Reinhardt CD, stamping out the beat with his blood-red Doc Martins – and ready to greet me with the first of many jokes of the day.

I was there for him in his dark times because he was a special man. I rejoiced with him in his good times because his life of laughter was so infectious. He poured his heart and creative skills into his fantasy clay figures – elves, goblins, fairies, knights and queens; legendary figures in boats, on horses, flying; his multitudes of wonderful dogs and birds.....a never-ending series of mythical figures bouncing with life, colour and humour, always with equally fascinating titles, or rhyming couplet explanatory CVs.

John was also a highly sought-after teacher, not only for the work he did for students at ASP, but also other pottery clubs like Manurewa and Papakura where he was well respected – and loved – for his lively classes. He enjoyed this teaching as he revelled in sharing his skills and humour with others, watching them let their hair down and try new ideas. He created his own fantasy world – but wanted everyone to enjoy visiting it as well.

I am left with not only wonderful memories of John and some of his



ceramic family/zoo, but I have many poems and drawings very personal to me. Often, before I arrived at work he would sit having breakfast at my desk, doodling on the large desk blotter – drawings, cartoons, poems, rude jokes and messages. When full, I would remove the page leaving a clean sheet to be similarly treated. My collection of these makes for a special recollection of a very special friend.

John Green was a creative genius, taken before his time, missed and mourned greatly by many.

Gael Baldock

I was asked to write a funny story about John Green as there are many with him being such a trickster but he could have told them far better than I. And my relationship with him was far deeper and more serious. So, how does one describe a friendship of 25 years?

I learned hand built pottery but I was not into the conventional wood fired tableware that was the trend of the time. Then, when I was a student in Auckland, I saw an exhibition at Durham Arts of John Green's work and I quickly became a fan. Each piece of his work had a character, was named and accompanied by a poem in sort of a Dr Seuss style. Then there was a calendar with John's own bonsai trees and the pottery figures set in a scene

created in the bush behind his house. A whole other world of Fantasy Pottery opened up.

With my parents, I visited John at his studio in Paremoremo. John said he had been highly influenced by a book, "Fairies" illustrated by Brian Froud and Alan Dean. I had just been given that same book for my birthday.

is gave us lots to talk about and we became firm friends. (Brian Froud designed all the characters for Labyrinth and illustrated books for Margaret Mahy, and Alan Dean designed all the characters for Peter Jackson's "Lord of the Rings".) On his studio wall was a piece that caught my attention and when I said "Wow that's a cool piece it looks like a god looking down on us", he told me it was one of his first pieces, took it down and gave it to me. Everyone who knew John knew it was difficult to praise his work without him giving you the piece. He was such a warm, open, caring, cuddly, honest and absolutely lovely person.

I have fond memories of a dinner I attended in the old Post Office in Takapuna with English traditional food. There was "Toad in the Hole" for main and "Spotty Dick" for pudding shaped, as you would expect with John singing his own humorous songs where we all laughed the whole evening and had a great time.

Most apparent in his characters was his sense of humour. In particular a dragon named "Mu the Tragic Dragon", after which John and I emailed each other the rewritten lyrics for Mu living a life without Glee in a land called "Deary Me". For a time his work became naughty and he created little sort of phallic creatures called preens. One work stood out in my mind "Baked Preens on Toast", a line

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of pink preens with blue sunglasses sunbathing on a slice of toast. Toast was his current theme and source of humour. I bought a rat in sunglasses sitting on a slice of toast to add to my collection. Ten more recently a Zen quality was apparent in his work and I added a calm zebra. John loved to dine at my house and revisit a history of his characters. On his open day he told me he had cleared his calendar of teaching and exhibitions for 2007 so he could spend more time with his friends.

John collected a group of amazing people around him and there is now a big hole in the universe.



New health regulations came into effect on the 1st January for all throwers

Saturday Duty Roster

We need volunteers to supervise the Centre on Saturdays. The main duties are collecting money and selling clay. You also get all day to do your own work. Contact us now as we need to arrange the roster from now until July.

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Adrian Cotter

Adrian was one of the first of the 60s wave of stoneware potters in Auckland and he quickly developed a name as a maker of good quality domestic ware with great glazes and attractive decoration, selling well and making a good livelihood for many years. He taught at the ASP Centre from time to time, mainly dealing with the exploration of stoneware glazes. At the same time he developed a stoneware clay that became popular among Auckland potters and many of us used him as our main supplier – he was very good at producing reliable and consistent products, and eventually he built fibre/gas kilns as the market for pots quietened. His Cotter kilns were the best kilns by a mile at the time, mainly because they were made by someone who had actually had huge experience of firing pots to high temperatures under reduction and knew the properties that such kilns needed. He was a quiet and clever person with a sharp sense of humour, a passion for music especially jazz, and a curiosity about how things worked, and this came to include philosophical and religious exploration as well. His death comes as sad news to those of us who knew him.

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exhibitions

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

Compendium Gallery

Closing for renovation sale!

Unique fine Art & Craft includes: Malcolm Harrison, Barbara Bailey, Ann Gray, Graham Collings, Valerie Pendred, Claire Barton, James Bartle, Duncan Shearer, Gill Gane, Ande Barrett-Hegan.

Also:- selected wood, pottery, jewellery, glass.

Starts Monday, January 15th. 5 Lorne St. Tel: 300 3212

Auckland Museum

Kan: the Green Gallery Collection of International Studio Ceramics

Marking the generous gift of a large collection of contemporary ceramics to the Museum by Mr and Mrs Shigenori Itoh of Waiheke Island.

Corbans Estate Arts Centre

Tokens From The Game

An Outdoor Installation of Brick Works by Peter Lange

Opens on Thursday 1st February at 6pm and runs until 4th March.

Peter will give an artist's talk on Saturday 3rd March at 11am.

426 Great North Rd, Henderson. Ph 8384455

Classes

Term 1 starts on the 30th January and already two of the classes are full. Contact the Centre for the latest on class numbers.

BCDO summary of sales and tickets.

Last month we ran out of room for the summary of the Big Clay Day Out – so here it is for those members interested in final numbers

	2006	2005
Pot Sales	\$16,186	\$14,852
Tickets	\$2,981	\$2,927
Raffle	\$626	\$381
Auction	-	\$2,258

Profit \$5,960 \$7,040

The most popular event on the day by far was the catapult, attracting a continuous crowd and raising about \$200. The tandoori was also extremely popular and seriously challenged the sausages for top food spot. So far nearly all the paint-pot and raku ware has been collected, but if you still need to retrieve your pots then please drop into the Centre soon.